



Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-150

MEMORANDUM

TO: TMC and TAMWG
FROM: Mike Dixon, Acting Executive Director
Trinity River Restoration Program
SUBJECT: Director's Report (Revised)
DATE: September 26, 2016

Major TRRP activities between June 1, 2016 and September 23, 2016 focused on program efforts to:
1) Finalize the Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Project CLOMR and County floodplain development permit; 2) Mobilize and complete in-channel construction of the Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Project; 3) Seek efficiencies within FY17 budget to be decided at September TMC meeting in accordance with tasking from June meeting; 4) Continue working with partner agencies and contractors to refine designs and complete NEPA/CEQA for potential 2017 channel rehabilitation projects; 5) Multi-beam sonar bathymetry surveys were completed toward a new full 40-mile terrain model and ground surveys to fill gaps commenced; 6) our summer aerial photography was flown August 3rd; 7) Support lower Klamath Augmentation flow data needs. Details on some of these activities follow.

Budget Update

The TRRP FY2017 proposed budget has evolved considerably and awaits approval by the TMC at the 28-29 September 2016 meeting. In particular, decisions need to be made regarding requested budget increases to certain items and efficiencies proposed by DOI within science proposals in order to balance the budget. See attached decisions worksheet.

Organizational Updates

Executive Director: The ED vacancy was advertised in July. Based upon the limited applicant pool, the decision was made to re-advertise the position from 15 August to 02 September. The position was advertised to both current government employees and U.S. Citizens as either a Supervisory Interdisciplinary (Biological Science, Civil Engineer, or Physical Science) or a Program Manager. Well qualified applicants have been referred to the selecting official and interviews will be scheduled once we can schedule travel in the new FY.

Implementation Branch Chief: Mike Dixon reported for work on 13 June.

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Science Coordinator: Jennifer Norris accepted an offer to serve as Science Coordinator and started with the TRRP on 26 September.

Project Coordination Specialist, Realty and Compliance Outreach: Recruitment to replace Michele Gallagher's position was initiated on 08 September and closed on 21 September. The position was advertised as a GS-1101-9/11. Recruitment included all U.S. Citizens to increase the diversity of our applicant pool.

Civil Engineer: The staff civil engineer vacancy was advertised in June but failed to produce a viable certificate of qualified applicants. It will likely be re-advertised by early October. The Position Description is currently undergoing HR review to allow the position to be advertised as a GS 9/11/12 (it was previously a GS-12). Re-advertisement will be open to U.S. Citizens to increase applicant pool.

Grants and Agreements Specialist: Linsey Walker accepted a promotion starting 04 September with the NCAO. Recruitment paperwork has been submitted to the Mid-Pacific Office; in the interim, Linsey will continue supporting budget work in the TRRP.

Science Updates

- Workgroup Summaries (see Technical Workgroup Attachment 1)

Implementation Update

Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Site Construction

- Construction at the Bucktail project site is winding down. In-channel work was completed on September 9 in order to get ahead of potential emergency pulse flows for lower Klamath augmentation and in accordance with our SONCC Coho salmon BO deadline of September 15. Site conditions mandated some significant modifications to the design in the field (see Bucktail Map attachment). These included the re-engineering of the engineered log jam features and changing the split channel design to a low-flow side channel to reduce potential hazard to boaters. IC-1 bar and X-1 crossing were redesigned as a transverse bar to maintain hydraulic forcing into large IC-2 side channel.
- Increased flows for lower Klamath River preventative base and preventative pulse flows led to changes in construction timeline but did not result in any features not being built. However, high flows did cause the project to exceed the turbidity limits of water quality permit during ramp-ups to higher flows.
- Revegetation was completed on the right bank where vehicular access over the Salt Flat bridge is limited. Left bank revegetation will continue into fall of 2016.

Compliance

- Bucktail CLOMR/LOMR: Because FEMA adopted a new Flood Insurance Rate Map on July 20, the program was required to apply for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) to account for construction changes in the base flood elevation. TRRP staff worked closely with DWR, BOR staff, and the site designer (HVT/McBain Associates) to confirm that there were no changes in base flood elevation around insurable permitted structures. The CLOMR application was submitted by Trinity County on May 27. FEMA responded with an extensive request for further information. Following a laudable effort by all parties involved to respond to this request and great flexibility by FEMA, the CLOMR office confirmed that they had

completed their technical review of submitted information and the county issued the resulting Floodplain Development Permit on July 12. FEMA's CLOMR was received by the County on 17 September. Though redesigns have occurred during construction, the contractor (the Hoopa Valley/Yurok Tribal Team) have taken measures to ensure that the terrain submitted to FEMA during the CLOMR will be matched post-project data are submitted in the Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) to FEMA. Following the submittal of as-builts by the construction contractor and additional survey data, Trinity County will apply for the final LOMR.

- Deep Gulch and Sheridan Design/NEPA/CEQA: In order to reduce impacts, cost, and ease of access, the Deep Gulch and Sheridan will be implemented together and are being analyzed in one NEPA/CEQA document. Site visits were conducted on June 1 and 16 with the project designers (Federal and Yurok) and TRRP's NEPA contractor together with the BLM's cultural, natural, and forest resources staff to gather and address any concerns by the BLM. A framework for an EA has been developed and a public draft is expected to be released in November. Initial cost estimate exceeds FY17 construction budget, so phasing and/or additional funds will be required to implement.
- Lower Dutch Creek Design/NEPA/CEQA: Following a series of meetings and a 27 July site visit with the design team, TRRP staff/contractors, and USFS staff, the design for Lower Dutch Creek has evolved somewhat. While it appears that the design changes can mitigate concerns over cultural and natural resources, there may be issues with FEMA compliance due to the location of several structures located near the site. Discussions with the design team are ongoing and a Design Team meeting on the topic is scheduled for 19 October.
- Programmatic NMFS BA: A draft BA was submitted for TRRP office and federal land manager (BLM and USFS) review by NSR in July. It was reviewed by NMFS staff in August and extensive comments were received; revisions are ongoing. Inclusion of TRRP watershed and monitoring activities is now planned.
- Programmatic FWS BA: A draft BA was submitted for TRRP office and federal land manager (BLM and USFS) review by NSR in July. The USFWS has also provided input. Inclusion of watershed activities is also planned in this effort.
- FEMA compliance: Following the compressed process to get a floodplain development permit in time for in-channel construction at Bucktail, there have been a series of discussions between FEMA, BOR, and Trinity County planning staff regarding the timeline for future CLOMR submission and LOMR submissions for projects that were not included in the 20 July 2016 FEMA map. Required LOMRs include those for project completed since 2014 (Lower Junction City, Upper Douglas City, and Limekiln Gulch as well as Bucktail). A concern that has been raised is that designs need to be close to final for both NEPA and CLOMR submission, and that we should have completed NEPA prior to submitting a CLOMR application. The CLOMR process typically requires about 6 month from application to receipt of the CLOMR. The County permitted Bucktail this year based on receipt of FEMA's technical evaluation – not the CLOMR. The LOMR that follows construction should be based on post-construction, pre-spring flow surveys so that changes in flood elevation are based solely on construction activities. The steps inherent in this sequence produce a challenging timeline. Updates to follow as we proceed with development of CLOMR packages for Deep Gulch/Sheridan and Lower Dutch Creek Channel Rehab Projects and LOMRs for constructed projects.

Landowner issues

- In July, landowners near the Salt Flat Bridge raised an issue regarding domestic water availability. During spring flow releases, a pre-TRRP side channel on which they had built infiltration wells re-connected to the river about halfway down its length, reducing flows below the breach. This resulted in some wells failing to

produce water. TRRP staff visited and discussed options, which were discussed with TMC on the July call. Several concerns were raised, including that we are encouraging the river to be dynamic, not static, that we do not want to maintain engineered features that the river alters; further, the affected landowners had signed “hold harmless” agreements with Reclamation following acceptance of money to move their infiltration wells under the prior “Well Grants”. Reclamation explored options outside of TRRP, but the DOI Solicitor’s office opinion was that in the absence of a TRRP action, Reclamation lacked authority to expend federal funds. Staff referred the landowners to state drought grant fund opportunities and brought a contractor out from Bucktail to provide an estimate for a fix. At this time, I believe the landowners are mostly pursuing groundwater well installation.

- In July, an error was made in staging of logs near the Sheridan site, wherein logs were inadvertently placed in areas not agreed to by the landowners. Logs were moved and remediation and revegetation of the accidentally disturbed areas will take place during the fall. Landowners appear happy with the solution.
- In August, issues with noise at the Bucktail site came to a head when two vacation rental owners across the river began complaining that they were having to turn away customers because of the noise. When the project timeline began to allow flexibility in September, work hours shifted to 4 day weeks with later start and earlier end times to ease disturbance for the landowners. We will be doing earlier investigation and outreach to adjacent landowners during the FY17 construction season.

Public Outreach Update

- **June 29 2016** – Pre-construction meeting for neighboring landowners at Bucktail site
- **July 7 2016** - RCD Public Float
- **July 2016** – *Living on a Dynamic River* booklet published
- **August 9 2016** – Site tour of Bucktail for Congressman Jared Huffman
- **August 12-14 2016** – Trinity County Fair with TRRP represented at TCRCD booth; heavy promotion of jigsaw puzzle and cartoon map
- **September 2 2016** – *Conservation Almanac* summer article on importance of wood
- **September 14-15 2016** – 4th-5th grade summer day camp

Save the Date

- **October 8 2016** – Trinity County Salmon Festival
- **October 22 2016** – Spawning Day at Trinity River Hatchery

Publications and Reports:

- Bradley, D. N. 2016. [Trinity River 40 mile hydraulic model: development and analysis](#). Report to the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP), Technical Service Center report no SRH-2016-27. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, Colorado.
- Gaeuman, D., R. Stewart, and T. Buxton. 2016. [First steps toward a river corridor management strategy](#). Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) Technical Report TR-TRRP-2016-1. TRRP, Weaverville, California.
- Hoopa Valley Tribal Fisheries Department and McBain Associates. 2016. [Water year 2015 Trinity River Restoration Program riparian monitoring report](#). Report to the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). Hoopa Valley Tribal Fisheries Department, Hoopa, California.
- Snover, M. L. and M. J. Adams. 2016. [Herpetological monitoring and assessment on the Trinity River, Trinity County, California—Final report](#). Report to the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia. DOI: 10.3133/ofr20161089.

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Data Packages:

- GMA Hydrology. 2016. [Upper Douglas City as-built terrain surface data package](#). Data Package for the Trinity River Restoration Program under U.S. Bureau of Reclamation contract R14PC00122. GMA Hydrology, Inc., Arcata, California.
- Pryor, C. 2016. [2015 Junction City pools existing conditions survey report](#). Data Package for the Trinity River Restoration Program under U.S. Bureau of Reclamation contract R14PC00122. GMA Hydrology, Inc., Arcata, California.
- Pryor, C. 2016. [2015 Trinity River tributary deltas survey report, post spring flow release](#). Data Package for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) under U.S. Bureau of Reclamation contract R14PC00122. GMA Hydrology, Inc., Arcata, California.

